South Fur Lands

3



$3.50 Australia $4.50 New Zealand $6.00 Overseas

Down Under Caterwaulings

Issue 3

February 1996

Editorial

It's February and once again we've passed into the New Year. I hope everyone had a great time and didn't do something they'll be regretting for the rest of 1996. I hope you all managed to check out **Babe** at the cinema over the holidays. A great Australian anthropomorphic movie.

OzCon is right upon us here in Australia and by the time most of you read this, we would have had a great time and sold plenty of copies of *South Fur Lands*, including this issue. We'll tell you how it really went in the next edition. So those of you who are coming to **OzCon** say hello to us, those of you who are at the con reading this, it was nice meeting you and come to the party afterwards, and those of you who went to **OzCon** and are reading this later, thanks for being there and saying hello.

Our first special *South Fur Lands; SFL: Sex and Violence Supplement,* should be coming out in late March and after some of the submissions we've been getting it looks like it's going to be a very interesting furzine. Our own favourite weasel Simon is going to be handling most of the decisions on this one so look out for a very revolutionary cover design.

We here at Jagafeh Press would like to thank David B. MacPherson for helping us with the binding of over one hundred copies in the one day period we like to bind them in. We'd also like to thank him for his selection of eatables at lunch on that day. Our stomachs may hate you but we don't.

Remember that *South Fur Lands* is available from Mailbox Books for those of you overseas and unable to come across Australian cash. (Our cash is the fluro plastic money with windows in them.) Enjoy the fanzine and I'll see you in issue 4.

Jason (Jagafeh) Gaffney
Editor-in-Chief

ERRATUM

Apart from the obvious typing errors in issue 2 (*mea culpa*), those of you who can read sheet music will have noticed that Jason's song didn't quite work. Bar 3 was missing a note, and should have read the same as bar 11.

If you *still* think it doesn't sound quite right, Jason will be handing out free copies of a revised, improved version of his song to anyone who will take them at **OzCon**. See you there!

Marko Laine
Text Editor

Submission Deadlines

A general rule for submission deadlines is that they fall on the last day of every third month. Each issue will be released about a month later.

Issue 4 ..... 31st March 1996
Issue 5 ..... 30th June 1996

Who is Responsible for this Outrage?

Jason Gaffney
Editor-in-Chief

Marko Laine
Irritating Little Pedant
Design/Typesetting

Simon Raboczi
Design Ideas
Moral and Financial Support



South Fur Lands

Issue 3

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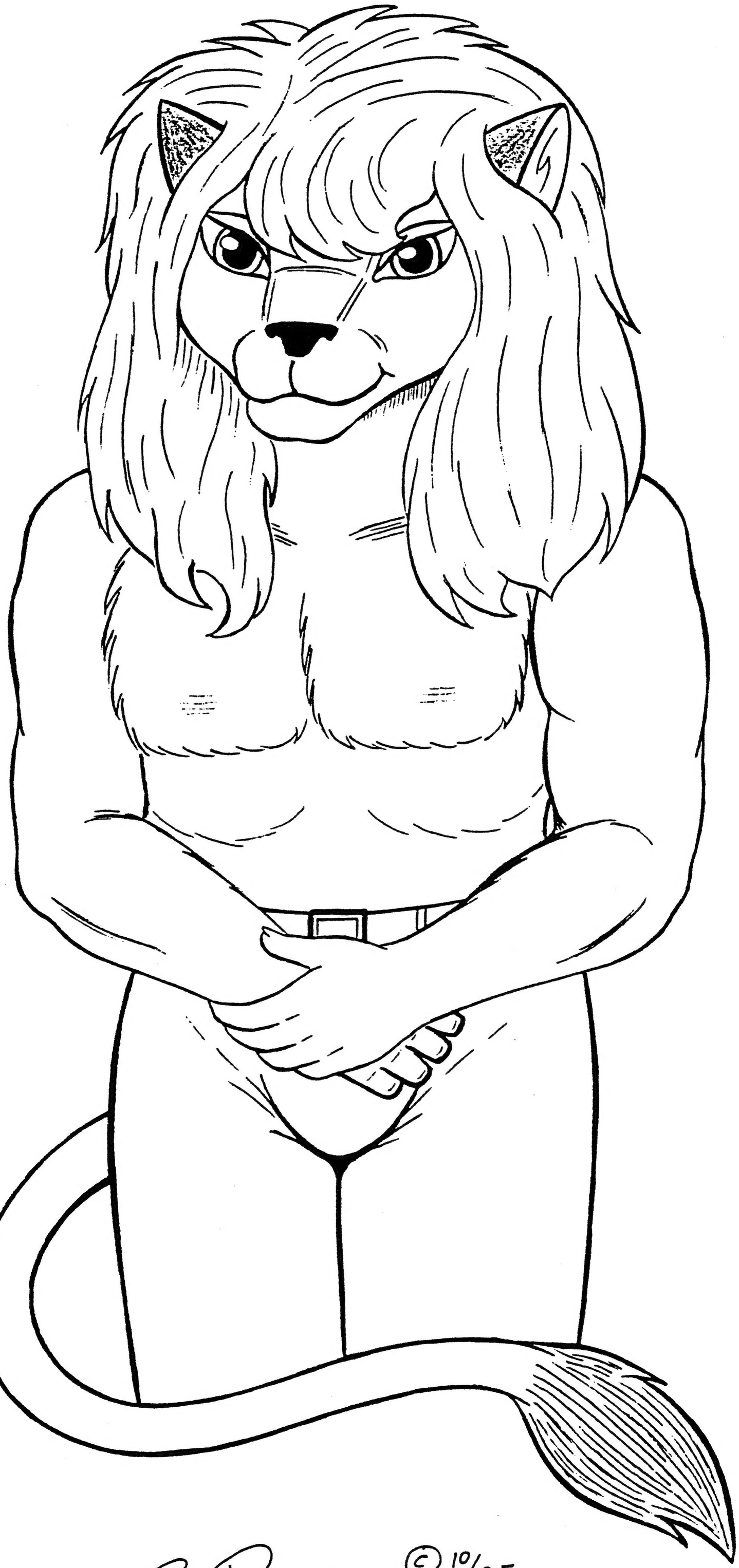
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PRINTED IN AUSTRALIA

LION'S PRIDE

Bernard Doove

This one was done for the ladies. There are plenty of furry females in art and I wanted to balance it out a bit with a male character. Aside from the play on words, I felt this lion had something to be proud about.



"LION'S PRIDE"



FOR ME? **Bernard Doove**
This piece came from a request to draw a character on the happiest day of her life. Not all furry fems are svelte creatures and I thought that this imposing lass would be exceptionally pleased to receive some honest attention. (I mucked up her left hand though.)

WASHING DAY
(overleaf)
Bernard Doove
My chakat *alter ego*, Goldfur, whose image Roy D. Pounds helped define. He suggested that I try drawing hir in everyday situations and I thought that not even chakats can avoid having to do laundry occasionally.

B Doove ©3/95

"FOR ME?" (A delicate flower for a not so delicate lady)



"WASHING DAY"


FLEA GUARD
SOFTA
FABRIC SOFTENER
SUDS
LAUNDRY DETERGENT
2kg
SUDS
2 kilograms
WHIRLWASH
© 11/95
B Doore

Furry Fandom—An Insider's View from the Outside

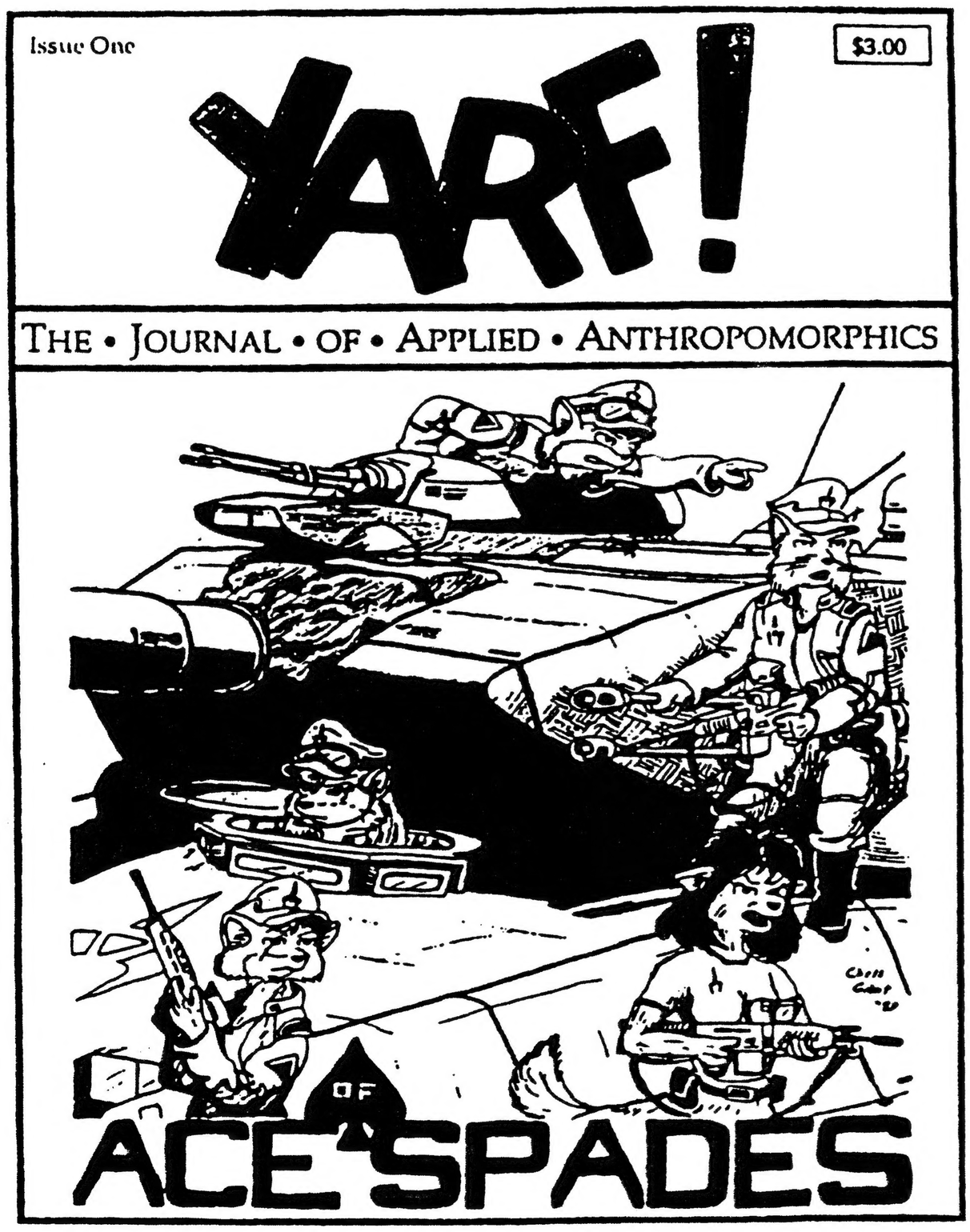
by Craig Hilton

Reprinted with permission from *Phlogiston* #40

Part II

Another face is furry militech—the sort of stuff that first started turning heads across the country and uniting minds with a common passion in **Albedo**. Far future SF, World War II, English Civil War or Vikings, anything that featured battles and hardware was In, but a particular love waxed apparent for big guns, and it was soon clear within some speculatively fantastic future scenario of the creator's own invention that guns could become very big indeed. (A flip through any zine would show you that Big Guns are outnumbered in Furry Fandom only by Big Bazonkas.) The professionally published equivalents included **Fusion**, **Space Wolf**, **Mighty Tiny** and **Furrlough**. The genre, both professional and fannish, eventually became so institutionalised that a joke that started out as a small, silly parody strip **Lesbian Foxes in Hovertanks** emerged fully-fledged as Paul Kidd's and Mike Sagara's brilliant **Tank Vixens**.

Furry romance is another face of the genre, and it's epitomised by Vicky Wyman's **Xanadu**. This presented itself as a fantasy tale in a US-flavoured mythical world of unicorns, dragons, gryphons and an array of animals, going through the scenarios of courtly high drama and down-to-earth true love. The work was appealing and soon gained a loyal following which was out of proportion to the mere five issues (plus a colour one-shot) it ran for. For the rest of eternity now, likenesses of the sophomoric Empress Alicia, regal anthropomorphic unicorn in a skimpy nightie, will grace the APAs and the sketchbooks and the art shows and the E-mail bulletin boards, testament to the power of the untapped potential of a fantasy Universe for giving young creators a land to play around in. Which is not to decry, by the way, the strength of Wyman's writing and the beauty of her artwork, both of which were landmarks. Staunch admirer Lex Nakashima carried on the torch with his shared-world text/artwork/comic fanzine **The Ever Changing Palace** (six issues, 1990 to the present), the largest repository of **Xanadu**-related creativity in existence. **ECP** in fact is a paragon among fanzines, bordering upon the semiprozine. Lavish production values (even by the standards of Furry Fandom) and hand-picked contributors make it stand alongside other professionally published anthologies, yet it is still a fannish labour of love and the artists and writers are not paid any money for their efforts, just copies of the end result and the accompanying egoboo.



It's this sort of story in the militech genre that inspired the parody **Tank Vixens**. © Chris Grant

Along with **Xanadu** in the romantic fantasy lands are **Rhudiprrt, Prince of Fur**, **Katmandu** and many others, some of which have run longer but have made less impact in the fandom. And then another form of romance or drama is the so-called "slice of life" story, as seen in **Shanda the Panda** and **Wild Life**.

And for each and every face of the above and more, its non-professional equivalent will be found in the fanzines and the APAs. Which takes me back to 1988. I was working a six month stretch at Port Hedland Regional Hospital on the remote north-west coast when my letter asking to

join **Rowrbrazzle** was accepted. I'd seen the **Amazing Heroes** piece and followed it up on a whim. **Critters**, **Albedo**, **Fusion**, **The Dreamery** and **Xanadu** were my passion, and now here I had the chance to commune with like-minded cartoonists including some of the people who actually did the comics I liked to read. What I didn't know then was that in the house rules of Furry Fandom, joining an APA was one way of gaining "legitimacy", to distinguish a proper fan from a "fanboy". All I did know was that this gave me a paper trail to follow up actively a gang of new friends. In mainstream SF fanzine fandom, you can scarcely stay in touch without having to be at least a little active, or interactive. In Furry Fandom you *can* be interactive, but you have to make more of an effort to do so. Or you can simply be a consumer, buying the fanzines and the artwork, sampling the E-mail bulletin boards, getting cartoonists to draw in your sketchbook. For my part, I accumulated a wide family of friends who liked the sort of animal stories that I did. My tastes in these became progressively more US fannish, and perhaps in turn the fandom itself was enriched that tiny bit by the *soupçon* of Anglo-Saxon Australian content I injected into it. I didn't enter into any *Australian* chapter of Furry Fandom because there simply wasn't any. I mean, there *was* Melbourne's Paul Kidd, whose *métier* was text fiction and role-playing game design, but by a strange parallel at exactly the same time *he* was finding his way into US-based Furry Fandom too. I now know of two more recent Australian followers, Amy Pronovost from Perth and Jason Gaffney from Cabbage Tree Point in Queensland, and they too have done it by facing the stars and stripes and catching the fannish drops trickling down from America. If we ever eventually get an ANZ-based Furry Fandom going, it's going to have to build up a much greater population to reach its critical mass. It may have to exist completely by correspondence to achieve this. It would be great if it were fuelled by a devotion to local professional products like **Flash Damingo** by Gary Chaloner in Perth, **Hairbutt the Hippo** by Jason Paulos and Bodine Amerikah in Sydney and **Roscoe the Dawg** by Marty Trengove in Melbourne. It would be great if some of our major local conventions had Furry Fandom enclaves which were more than just one or two fen telling entertaining stories of strange customs from a faraway land. Perhaps one day we *will* have all this, but for the moment we must append ourselves to The States.

So as the years went by from 1988, I witnessed the burgeoning number of fanzines in the field: **FUR-therance** (Ray Rooney, 1989 to 1991), **FurNography** (Brenda Daverin, 1989 to 1991), **Mythagoras** (Watts Martin, 1990 to 1990), **Touch** (Mark Merlino, 1991 to the present), **Steam Victorian** (Zjonni Perchalski, 1993 to the present) and **Centaurs Gatherum** (Edd Pegg Jr, although this actually predated the others and was more of a special interest book into which Furry Fandom occasionally spilled). Shared world projects included **The Ever Changing Palace** (in the **Xanadu** world, Lex Nakashima, 1990 to the present), **Furkindred** (in a magical fantasy world, Chuck Melville, 1992 to the present), **Refractions** (in the **Albedo** world, R'ykandar Korra'ti, 1992) and **The Tai-Pan** (in the **Fusion** space opera world, 1993 to the present). APAs included **Furry Press Network** (One of the first general furry APAs after the time that demand began to grow to outnumber places, for example, in **Rowrbrazzle**, Gary Sutton, 1990 to 1991), **FURthest North Crew** (Canada taking on the baton from **FPN**, Paul Groulx, 1992 to the present), **Wildlife APAzine** (a sort of cross between an APA and a comic book, with issues planned for sale, Matt High, 1992 to 1993) and **Huzzah!**. Now, **Huzzah!** had a particularly interesting history, beginning its numbered run as Steve Gallacci's very *very* first zine (or equivalent) from 1978 while he was in the services stationed in West Germany. Many years later, in 1989, an enthusiast Dwight J. Dutton adopted its banner as a briefly shining **Albedo** fanzine, and then still later in 1992 took it further as a sort of personally produced and funded general furry APA (an intriguing and unique venture, by the way—neither strictly fanzine nor APA, which puts it without a precise equivalent in the traditional forms of fannish publishing that I'm aware, but with an extraordinarily fine end product coming out each quarter.) In this case, Dutton's impetus to manage the sort of furry book *he* would like to read came as a reaction against the trend of diminishing pages of comic book stories increasingly lost within reams of printed text fiction. As a response, he set about compiling fine, slim volumes of the highest quality art (comic stories by preference) that he could lay his hands on. Some would say elitist.

Remember that **Vootie** was for cartoonists only. Since that time text fiction has had to fight for legitimacy in the realm. This has been partly because while a good proportion of art has been of professional quality done by professional artists, the same cannot be said for the written word. Even though furrydom's commercially published comic book face includes much which is economically propped up by more mainstream lines, the commercial novels and short stories of Furry Fandom (with a couple of exceptions—Gerald Perkins, Jeff Swycaffer and more recently Paul Kidd have had books published) are virtually non-existent outside of Publication By Fannish Whim, for example **The Ever Changing Palace** and **Furkindred**. As you can well guess, the best fan fiction is pretty well readable but the worst can be dreadful.

So the writers stick with the fanzines and other collectives—**Rowrbrazzle**, **Yarf!**, **Touch**, **Zoomorphica**, **The Tai-Pan**, and on the internet **Furry Muck** and **The Prancing Skiltaire**. The furries on the net, I'm told, are a small but very active group.

And plenty of furries trade their artwork on the net and sing furry filk and play role-playing games, such as the **Albedo RPG** and the **Lace and Steel RPG**, and get heavily involved in the characters they've created.

And at any of the major or minor SF conventions they associate and all do their furry things. A favourite is the **San Diego Comic Convention**, which in 1993 had an estimated 27,000+ attendance. Obviously, even

a minuscule fraction of this number would still provide a robust number of furry fans on site, which it traditionally does. And in recent years, furries have had entire conventions to themselves, specifically **Con-Furence** in the Los Angeles environs, of which number five in 1994 fielded an estimated 650. I haven't heard of any notable programme items (except at **SD** once: *"Furry Fandom—Threat or Menace?"* which was notable only for its offensive pretext). Instead, most of the action takes place with the general socialising and messing about at the dealers' tables, and at the cheap restaurants, and in the car parks (playing Smurfball) and of course in the room parties. This at least is according to the many convention reports I've read over the years, almost all of them in the traditional comic format and a good proportion of them drawn by Jim Groat.

Furry room parties began, as far as I can tell, when members of an APA who had come to a con from far and wide took the opportunity to meet in the traditional fannish way. In this way they identified with one another socially as well as on paper. When did it begin? That's a difficult one. Tim Fay knows of Marc Schirmeister's parties for **Rowrbrazzle** members from the APA's inception in 1984. **Rowrbrazzle** parties at **Comic Con** and the **Worldcon** and various major SF conventions were talked about as a fairly fresh and evolving phenomenon when I joined in 1988 (**Baycon** seems to have been a significant date at this time), and very shortly after came the reports of friendly rivalry between these and the **Furversion** parties. Then Furry Fandom grew, APA memberships swelled, and the hotel rooms began to bulge at the seams. Parties became basically furry parties in general, and great coordination was soon necessary to avoid booking clashes in the many ones scheduled for a weekend. And then the APAs had to hold their own exclusive ones just so the members could actually get together themselves as they had wanted to in the first place... and so on.

At conventions and any time they can, furry fans will often solicit or swap drawings in sketchbooks. I should point out American sketchbooks are in the same league with small telephone directories. It's common lately for this to be rationed to special friends, or for a fee at programmed sessions such as at the dealers' tables, since the practice taken to its extreme was tending to kill the actual socialisation and was positively lethal to room parties.

Furry mannerisms included saying "Chirp" as a form of greeting, until some people began to find it tiresome. In fact, the epitome of tiresomeness—the ugly face of Furry Fandom—is what is termed the "fanboy". A fanboy is what results when singleminded fannish obsession overwhelms social skills, decency and respect. Fanboys are arrogant enough to believe that because they share the same closely knit enclave as some talented professional cartoonists, they own their time. If they have drawn or written anything of their own it is on a par with the best of them. They are fuggheads and nerds and are annoying at the time, but all fandoms have their own, and after it's all said and done they're the source of some great anecdotes.

Furry Fandom's greatest strength is that its small size within the greater Fandom makes it a cosy little united group, where potentially everybody can know everybody, personally or by reputation. Its danger is in becoming insular, developing such an inward gaze on the funny animal genre that it sees nothing else. If this happens, then gone will be the well-rounded, well-adjusted boundary crossers. *All fur good. No fur bad.* Now that *can't* be a healthy attitude.

But from here in the Antipodes, removed from the thick of this insularity, sampling our American fandom from Australia and Aotearoa as we so often have to do, we don't face this problem so acutely. The Furry Fandom we have is that which we may care to pick and choose. We have fewer individuals and more individuality. And if we louse it up, we have only ourselves to blame.

So this is where I'm at, in 1994, an aficionado of anthropomorphic animal stories, wistfully and busily employed in a small town in Western Australia and in my moments of spare time drawing cartoons and writing stories and articles for furry zines and APAs. I personally look forward to an increasing involvement in this strange and wonderful land of the imagination. I have no idea how many people reading this will share the same love for it all. For those who don't, no amount of explaining will get them there. But for those of you out there who do, all I need to say is... "There it is. Go for it!"

For the latest in what's happening on the Furry Fandom scene, I highly recommend the newszine **In-Fur-Nation, PO Box 1958, Garden Grove, CA 92642-1958, USA**.

My special thanks go to Ken Fletcher, Chuck Melville, Edd Vick, Fred Patten and Tim Fay, all of whom have gone out of their way to help me compile this article.



My favourite animal in a scenario/ story of my own. © Craig Hilton

Fred Patten's Letter of Comment

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Fred Patten
Culver City, California
USA

Thank you very much for the copy of **Phlogiston** 40. Craig Hilton had said that you would be publishing his detailed description of Furry Fandom, but I hadn't ex-

pected Jefferson Swycaffer's analysis, as well. This set of outsider/insider surveys covers the field very thoroughly.

It seems noteworthy that a similar overview of Furry Fandom, by Taral Wayne, has just appeared in the current issue of Mike Glyer's **FILE 770**. Does this mean that it is "steam engine" time for the genre to start being taken seriously by the rest of fandom? In any case, since it has been around for between the last ten and fifteen years, it is good to see that it is beginning to develop its own sense of historiography.

Craig Hilton's historical essay implies that Furry Fandom coalesced so imperceptibly that there is no one specific date that can be claimed, "This is when Furry Fandom started." In general, I agree, but there is one more major influence that he, in Australia, would not have been aware of since it never left a paper record like **Vootie** or **Quack** and **No Ducks**. This also ties in to the comment at the end of his history about the lack of information about the beginning of the Furry room parties at conventions.

The room parties began with the gathering of the social group around Steve Gallacci, which led to his publication of **Albedo** in June 1984; without which there may have been no **Erma Felna** or **Usagi Yojimbo** or Fantagraphics' **Critters**, since they all started in or were influenced by the success of **Albedo**. This group was also significant because it was initially inspired by a common interest in the anthropomorphic aspects of SF literature, not comic-art magazines.

This gathering can be specifically dated to the 1980 **World Science Fiction Convention** in Boston. It was there that Gallacci appeared in American fandom for the first time, fresh from an Air Force base in Germany. He had several paintings in the Art Show. Most were of futuristic military vehicles, but one was a painting of **Erma Felna** in a flight suit about to enter a fighter spacecraft. The disparity of a funny-animal character in such a hard-tech setting intrigued several fans. I was one, and I remember that Mark Merlino and Nicolai Shapero were two others, if anyone is collecting names of "charter members" of Furry Fandom.

Gallacci explained that this was more than just a picture intended to get attention by its novelty. It was part of a long "future history" series that he had been working on for years, and it was pertinent to the basic plot that the characters were bioengineered, anthropomorphized animals rather than humans. He had a large briefcase full of story fragments in comic-art form that he was happy to show anyone who cared to look through them.

This was the start of an informal group that made a point of gathering around Gallacci at every **Worldcon** for the next several years, and at most of the annual **Westercons** (held up and down the West Coast of North America) after Gallacci left the Air Force and settled in Seattle. The main focus was to see what Gallacci had added to his **Erma Felna** story-notes since the last convention. But conversation naturally included other SF works on the theme of bioengineered intelligent animal characters. The most notable examples were Cordwainer Smith's **Underpeople** series, and Neal Barrett's four **Aldair** novels which were appearing from DAW Books just then.

It didn't take long to discover that we all seemed to have the same favourite books in science fiction, and that most of them starred strong alien characters. Poul Anderson's & Gordon Dickson's **Hoka** stories; plus Anderson's own novels featuring Chee Lan and Adzel, the cat-like and dragon-like interstellar exploration team (with whatshisname, their human partner who was the nominal hero of the stories, but nobody cared about him); and Dickson's own **Spatial Delivery** and **Spacepaw**, with his bear-like Dilbians. Hal Clement's classics like **Needle**, starring the amoeba-like detective, the Hunter, who teams up with a human boy to find an alien criminal hiding on Earth; or **Mission of Gravity**, about humans working through a long-distance radio partnership with a team of friendly caterpillar-like aliens on a planet on which humans could never survive. There were Robert Heinlein's Willis, the Martian in **Red Planet**; the title character in **Star Beast**; and the Mother-Thing in **Have Spacesuit, Will Travel**. And lots more. Anne McCaffrey's **Decision at Doona**. Cynthia Felice's **Godsfire**. Everybody had a title or two to recommend.

So these annual or semi-annual gatherings around Gallacci at the **Worldcons** and **Westercons** from 1980 to 1984 or 1985 were always full of "Have you read...?" conversations, to make sure that nobody missed some new SF story with an anthropomorphic character that had recently come out; or that some newcomer to our group hadn't missed some classic (like Olaf Stapledon's **Sirius**) that he would surely enjoy. When Greg Wadsworth's now-forgotten B/W indie comic, **Ismet**, came out in 1981/82 (five issues; a drama about interstellar funny animals battling against cruel human domination), that generated plenty of comments to Gallacci along the lines of, "If this guy can publish his own comic, you can do the same with your **Erma Felna** story." The Don Bluth movie, **The Secret of NIMH**, was a hot topic that was discussed and debated for a couple of years. These "Gallacci gatherings" also led to some personal correspondences between fellow-attendees, between the cons.

It was also Gallacci's habit of showing his **Erma Felna** rough pencil sketches to us that led to the other artists among us displaying their anthropomorphic drawings, and trading drawings in each other's sketchbooks. This led directly to the now notorious tradition of the "dreaded black sketchbooks" at Furry Parties.

There may well have been convention room parties among **Vootie** members or **Pogo** fans or other groups of funny-animal enthusiasts during this time. But if so, they were not open and they did not have any influence.

In my opinion, it was the moral support that Gallacci received at these convention gatherings over four years for his **Erma Felna** graphic-art novel that led to his decision to begin publishing **Albedo** in early 1984, with the first issue coming out in June.

Further, when Marc Schirmeister started **Rowr-**

brazzle at this same time, the names of the regular attendees of the "Gallacci gatherings" provided a talent pool for his invitations. This, I believe, was a key factor as to why **'Brazzle** was an instant success when **Vootie** had just fallen apart. It also establishes that the Gallacci-centered room parties definitely pre-dated **Rowrbrazzle**, and whatever influences **'Brazzle** has had.

It might be said that the "Gallacci gatherings" disappeared after 1984 because they evolved into or merged with **Rowrbrazzle**. Gallacci himself became a **'Brazzle** member, as did I and numerous others. This enabled us to continue our Furry socialising through our APA contributions every three months, so there was no longer so much emotional pressure for our "fix" through gathering in person at conventions. The "Gallacci gatherings" had already begun to spin off some personal correspondences between the cons; and if most of its core hadn't gotten sucked into **Rowrbrazzle** during 1984, it's likely that the group would have soon evolved its own **'Brazzle**-like publication and a formal identity.

Schirm started hosting a **Rowrbrazzle** party at the **San Diego Comic-Cons**, for members only. Since Gallacci and most of the group around him were now in **'Brazzle**, that group began to lose its identity within **'Brazzle**. It was at this point that Mark Merlino (who was not then in **'Brazzle**) decided that this still-nameless fandom needed to publicise its existence to fandom at large.

Merlino and Rod O'Riley started the Furry Parties to provide an open social centre for attendees with a Furry bent who were not in **'Brazzle**. The first was at **Westercon** 39, in San Diego, in July 1986. Merlino may have hosted earlier parties on a try-out basis, but he says that the one at **Westercon** 39 was the first "official" one. These established the name of "Furry Party", which almost certainly led to the name of Furry Fandom for the whole genre. They also fixed the image of a group which plastered the con with their Furry Party flyers displaying "sexy funny-animal" pin-up art.

It was just after **BayCon** '87, in San Jose, California, in May 1987, that Karl Maurer sent out **Furversion** #1 to everybody who had signed an address list at the Furry Party there. **Furversion** #1 announced itself to be the newsletter of the Furry Parties, to enable those fans who had found each other through the parties to keep in contact between conventions. Merlino and O'Riley announced the next six conventions at which they would hold Furry Parties, including the 1987 **Worldcon** in Brighton, England. Fans were invited to send in letters.

Within its first five issues, **Furversion** got so many submissions of fan fiction and full-page drawings that it was transformed into the first Furry small-press literary magazine, outgrowing its formal affiliation with the Furry Parties. **Furversion** was directly followed by its eventual successor, **Yarf!**, in 1990, and it can also be considered a godfather to all the subsequent literary fanzines such as **FurNography** and **FURtherance** with an emphasis on fur in their titles. Meanwhile, the popularity of the Furry Parties at conventions throughout fandom led Merlino & O'Riley to begin the annual **ConFurences** in 1989.

So—although **Rowrbrazzle** was started specifically as a replacement for **Vootie** in February 1984; the first public Furry Party was in July 1986; and Steve Gallacci's first published **Albedo** featuring serious anthropomorphic stories was in June 1984—all of these can be traced directly back to the informal group of what might be called proto-Furry fans between the 1980 **Worldcon** and early 1984. I submit that it was this group that was the first to think of themselves as some kind of special fandom—not just SF fans who happened to like aliens better than humans, or comic book fans who preferred funny animals to super-heroes, or social rebels who grooved on funny animals doing naughty mature things because it was shocking, but all of this mixed together with something more. It was a mixture that bound us together more tightly than just saying, "Hey, did you see Alan Dean Foster's new **Spellsinger** novel?", or, "What do you think about the **Captain Carrot** comic book?", in casual conversation at a general SF or comic-book con.

> 'It was at **BayCons** that Furry Party flyers were torn down almost as soon as they were put up...'

I don't think that I'd say that Furry Fandom per se began as early as the first gathering in Gallacci's hotel room at the 1980 **Worldcon**. The date may be too amorphous to be definable. At what specific point did amino acids evolve into what could be called life on Earth? At any rate, Furry Fandom was a self-aware entity by the time that Schirm started **Rowrbrazzle**. I wouldn't have thought that the actual term "Furry Fandom" was in use that early, but if Jeff Swycaffer was referring to it by that name in a fanzine in 1983, I guess it must've been. Nevertheless, I doubt that the phrase became widespread before the Furry Parties began to publicise it in the late eighties.

I also think that it can't be dated as far back as the beginnings of **Vootie** in 1976. The members of **Vootie** may have all been fans of funny animals, but **Vootie** was a cartoonists' club. Non-artist fans of funny animals who wanted to write about them were not eligible to join. (I know; I applied and was rejected on those grounds. Actually, they said something more along the lines of, "You're not a *real* fan of funny animals unless you can draw them yourself!" This sounds suspiciously like the opinion that animator John Kricfalusi is currently espousing, that good animated cartoons don't need writers, just good cartoonists.)

Anyhow, the public perception of **Vootie** at the time was that it was an exclusive APA for fan cartoonists who enjoyed funny-animal type humour. It was part of a chain of cartoon satire that included **Quack** and **Howard the Duck** and the Disney funny-animal ver-

sion of **Robin Hood** and **Fritz the Cat** (both Crumb's original comix and the Bakshi-Krantz animated cartoon) and the Dan O'Neill-led **Air Pirates** assault on the Disney morality, with Mickey Mouse and other funny animals drawn in obscene and perverse situations. Yes, **Vootie** was a very significant antecedent, but it didn't recognise itself as heralding a new genre. You might say that Furry critical mass wasn't achieved until the early nineteen-eighties, when all these different elements were recognised—both aboveground and underground comic books and animated cartoons, plus the SF novels with anthropomorphic characters; ie both art and writing in all aspects—and consciously combined in a comprehensive goulash.

Getting back to the Furry room parties at conventions, it's also significant that Marc Schirmeister kept the **Rowrbrazzle** Parties private, and he usually only went to the annual **San Diego Comic-Con**. Contrariwise, Mark Merlino not only held Furry Parties at every con that he could attend, he encouraged other fans to hold them at cons which he couldn't attend. When I became the Official Editor of **Rowrbrazzle** in 1989, I opened the **'Brazzle** Parties to the public, but we continued to hold them as an annual event at the **San Diego Comic-Con**, with very few exceptions. So the tradition of Furry room parties is definitely attributable to Merlino's "official" Furry Parties, which grew out of Gallacci's informal room gatherings. The **'Brazzle** Parties have been inconsequential as having any influence. Also, there has been no rivalry between them and the Furry Parties, except inasmuch that it has been Merlino's policy to hold a Furry Party on every night of a convention, not just a single evening. That makes it impossible for anyone else to hold a party at the **San Diego Comic-Con** without it being "in conflict" with a Furry Party.

The annual Northern California **BayCons** were significant to the early Furry room parties because, before Merlino started the **ConFurences** in 1989, he tried to establish the **BayCons** as Furry Fandom's "home base"; the one con that Furry Fans should try to attend each year to meet in person. It was at the 1987 **BayCon** that **Furversion** was born. Unfortunately, the **BayCons** also became significant for their notorious anti-Furry prejudice. It was at **BayCons** that Furry Party flyers were torn down almost as soon as they were put up, and parodied with counterfeits that replaced "Furry Party" with "Skunk-Fuckers' Party". It was also at the 1991 **BayCon**, not a **San Diego Comic-Con**, that the *Furry Fandom—Threat or Menace?* panel was held, where the moderator kept interrupting the panellists to ask why they weren't doing something constructive, such as joining protest marches against vivisection, if they really loved animals, instead of just putting all their efforts into drawing disgustingly sexist adolescent fantasy-pornography. The **BayCons** pretty well faded out of Furry Fandom significance after the **ConFurences** began.

Hmmm. There have been enough different dates given for the beginnings of **Vootie** and **Rowrbrazzle** that a clarified chronology might be worth printing. (Hilton says here that the final **Vootie** was in February 1983 and that Marc Schirmeister started **Rowrbrazzle** six months later, but **'Brazzle**'s birthday has always been celebrated as February 1984. Different articles have listed **Vootie** as having started in April or June 1976.) Reed Waller & Ken Fletcher sent out the first open invitation for applicants to join **Vootie** in February 1976. The first issue, iconoclastically numbered as **Vootie** #0, was published in April 1976. **Vootie** #1 did come out in June 1976. The final issue, **Vootie** #37 in February 1983, announced that #38 was scheduled for April. It wasn't until around the end of May that members realised something was seriously wrong.

According to Marc Schirmeister, both Tim Fay and he tried for awhile to revive **Vootie** before giving up in disgust. Schirm attended the 1983 **Worldcon** in Baltimore in September, and met enough non-**Vootie** Furry fans there (which doubtlessly included the Gallacci group) that he felt that a replacement for **Vootie** was feasible. After returning home, he talked it over with John Cawley, and Cawley persuaded him to give it a try. Schirm's call for contributions for the first **Rowrbrazzle** was sent out in October 1983, with an end-of-January 1984 deadline, and **'Brazzle** #1 was published in February 1984, with significant assistance by Cawley who has not been given sufficient recognition up to now.

There are a handful of other titles that Hilton missed, such as John Cawley's one-shot APA about anthropomorphic foxes, **The Foxhole**, in 1985, but there's no point in being obsessively complete. This is a fine history—and this letter is long enough already—so I'll end it with a congratulations to all concerned.



BRUSHTAIL'S DAEMON

Art by Andrew Murphy-Mee

Commissioned by Chris Baird (cjb@hna.com.au)

I now present for everyone's consideration the personal furry daemon for Brushtail.hna. com.au, the computer that amongst other things hosts the OZFURRY mailing list. It's a marsupial form of the official BSD Unix Devil Mascot, based on the design from the cover of the book **Design and Implementation of the 4.3BSD Unix Operating System**, by McKusick, et al; a popular reference text for Computer Science weenies like myself. :) A GIF-encoded colour image is available from the Internet; the URL is ftp://avatar.snc.edu/pub/furry/images/downloads/b/brushtl.gif





Grant Freckelton

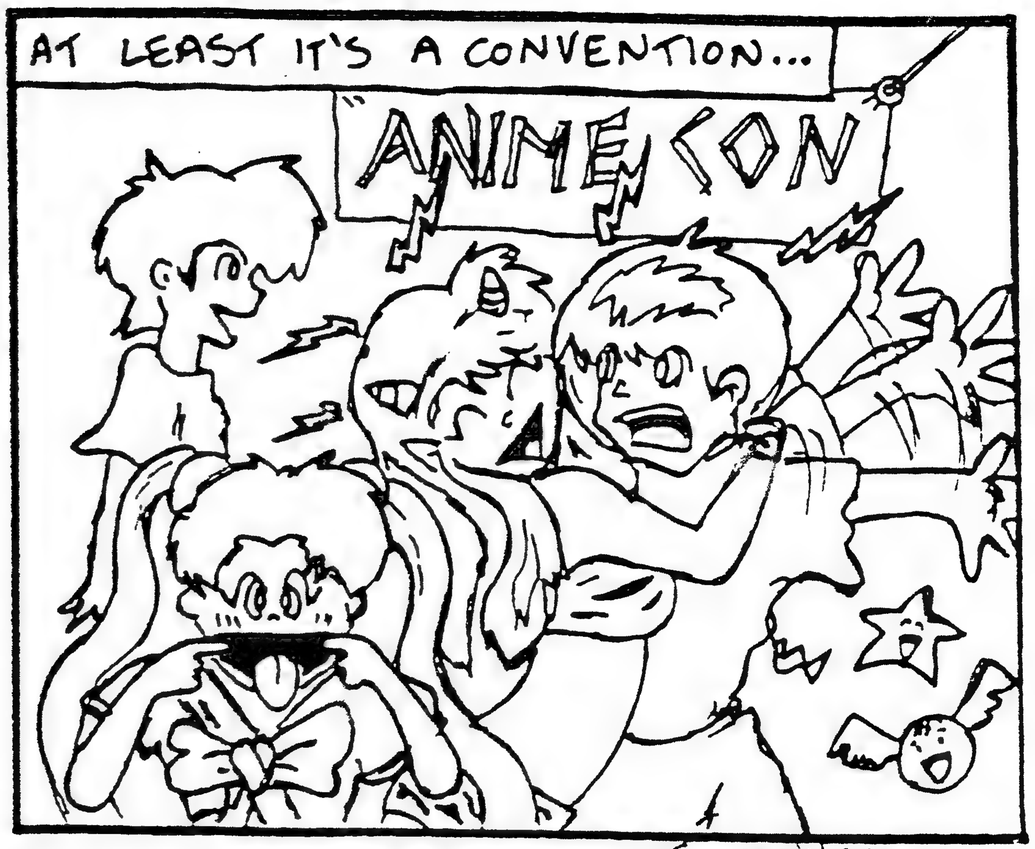
This image was done about 10 minutes after the aquiline portrait that appeared in *SFL* #1. It is indicative of nothing more than my fetish for 'shifters. Yuh, it's a werewolf, even though it kind of looks like a were-German shepherd. It makes a change from the slobbering beasties with oversized canines and bestial tendencies, which seem to be the popular conception of the myth. Call this a SNAL if you will. Sensitive New Age Lycanthrope.

Grant Freckelton

This one seems to just scream "done in a lecture". Unfortunately, a lot of my good work gets dampened by the fact that it is done on lined paper, usually because it is done during a lecture. Can't remember the circumstances of this one, I think it was a lecture on **Citizen Kane**, but anyway, this is a panther. Probably my favourite cat, ever since seeing the mildly furry and classically bad TV show, **Manimal**. This one looks kind of trendy, punkish or something (I keep thinking of Amy Pronovost's **Punkipine** <grin>). I think felines lend themself to the trendy image quite well, you just have to see **Red Dwarf**'s Cat to notice that.







AMARA E TORMANI in CROSS GENRE CHAOS

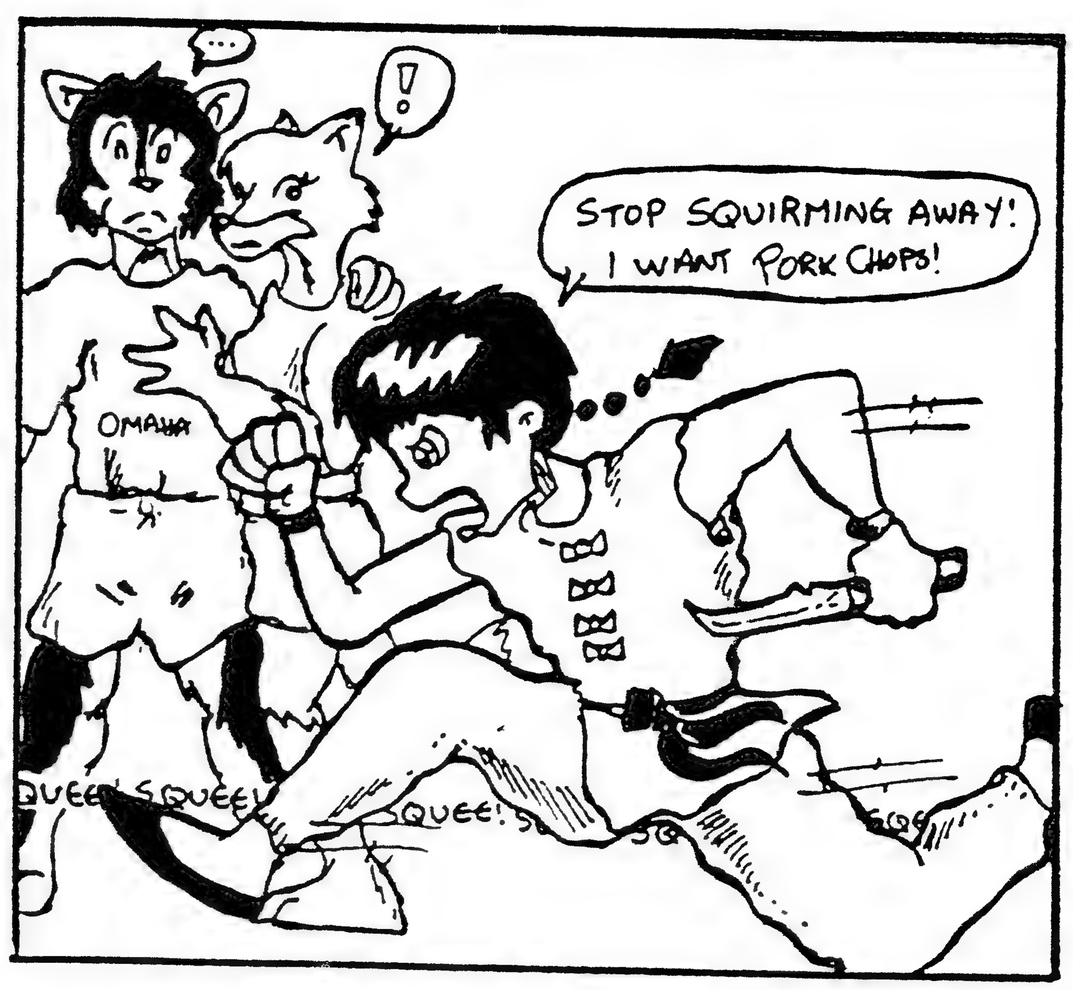


BY: AMY FRANK' PRONOVOST ©etc..



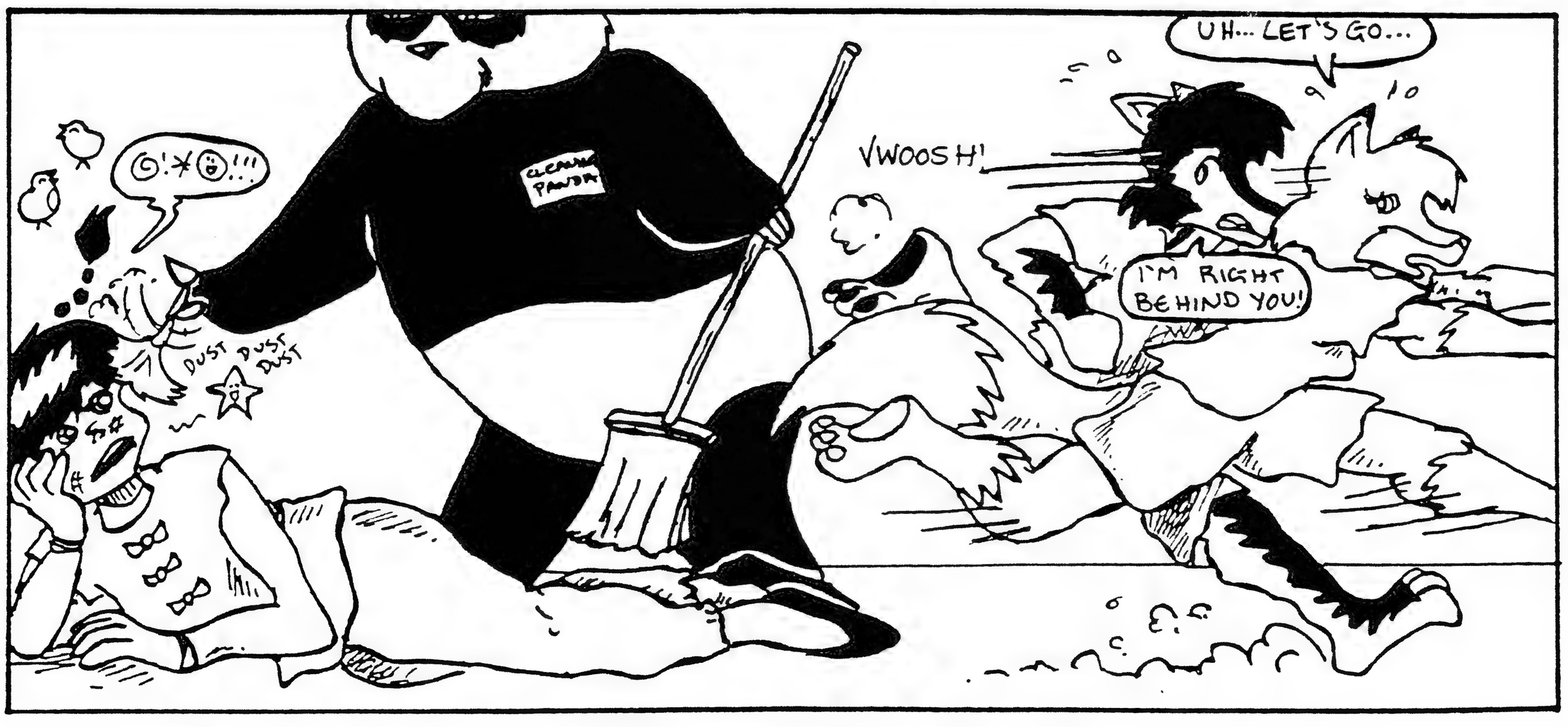
-1-


HEY! LETS MINGLE!
YEH, WE MAY AS WELL ENJOY OURSELVES.. I THINK I EVEN SAW SOME OTHER FURRIES!
OMAHA
HEY!
SQUEE! SQUEE! SQUEE


...
!
STOP SQUIRMING AWAY! I WANT PORK CHOPS!
OMAHA
QUEE! SQUEE!
SQUEE!


?
P-CHAAAAN!!
RANMA! YOU MALE PIG!
OMAHA
GET SOME PORK ON YOUR FORK!
QUEE! SQUEE! SQU
QUEE.


THAT HAD TO HURT!
AYUP.
CRASH
RANMA!!!
AKANE! OW! OW!
QUEE! SQUEE! SQUEE! SQUEE! SQUEE! SQUEE! SQUEE!


@!*@!!!
DUST DUST DUST
CLEANING PANDA
VWOOSH!
UH... LET'S GO...
I'M RIGHT BEHIND YOU!


WE NEED AN EXIT.. Now!
THIS IS SCARY!
I'M WORKING ON IT!!
TO-TO-ROOO!
YIPE!
YAHHHHHHH!


IDEO
OOM
?
LET'S GO THIS WAYY...OOF!
OW!


TENTACLES XXX
THAT A WAY
YAAAAAA!
?
GANGWAAAY!!

CREAK!

QUICK! IN HERE!

TENTACLES XXX

ADULTS ONLY

CLICK!

RUSH!

RUSH!

WOOOOOO.....

HMM... IT'S AWFULLY DARK IN HERE!

YEH.. I'LL LOOK FOR THE LIGHTS!

YOUR PLACE OR MINE?

SLORP!

!?!

?

SLORP! OOZE!

TORMANI! ALTHOUGH THAT HAS THE POTENTIAL TO BE ENJOYABLE, IT IS NOT THE TIME OR THE PLACE!

KLIK!

OMAHA

SLORP! SLURP! PANT! PANT!

PANT! PANT! OOZE!

UM... THAT'S NOT ME... I'M OVER HERE!

UH... WHO IS IT THEN?

I'VE FOUND THE LIGHTS... LET'S FIND OUT!

SLUUURP! OOZE! GLURBLE! SLORP! SLOOCH! PANT!

I'LL HAVE THE BLACK AND WHITE ONE!

YAAAHHH!!!





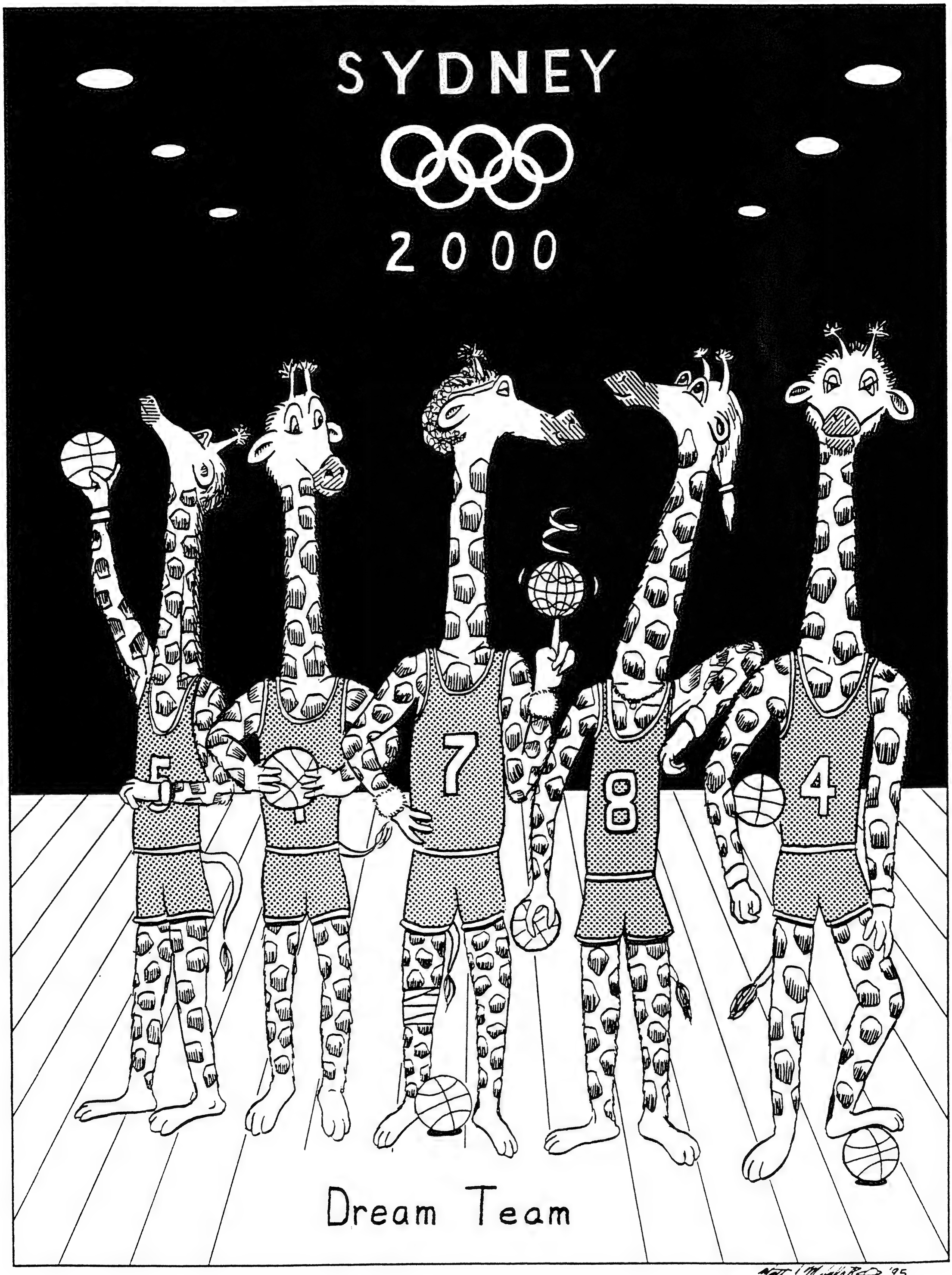








NEXT: CON TREKKING ACCROSS THE FURRY-VERSE!

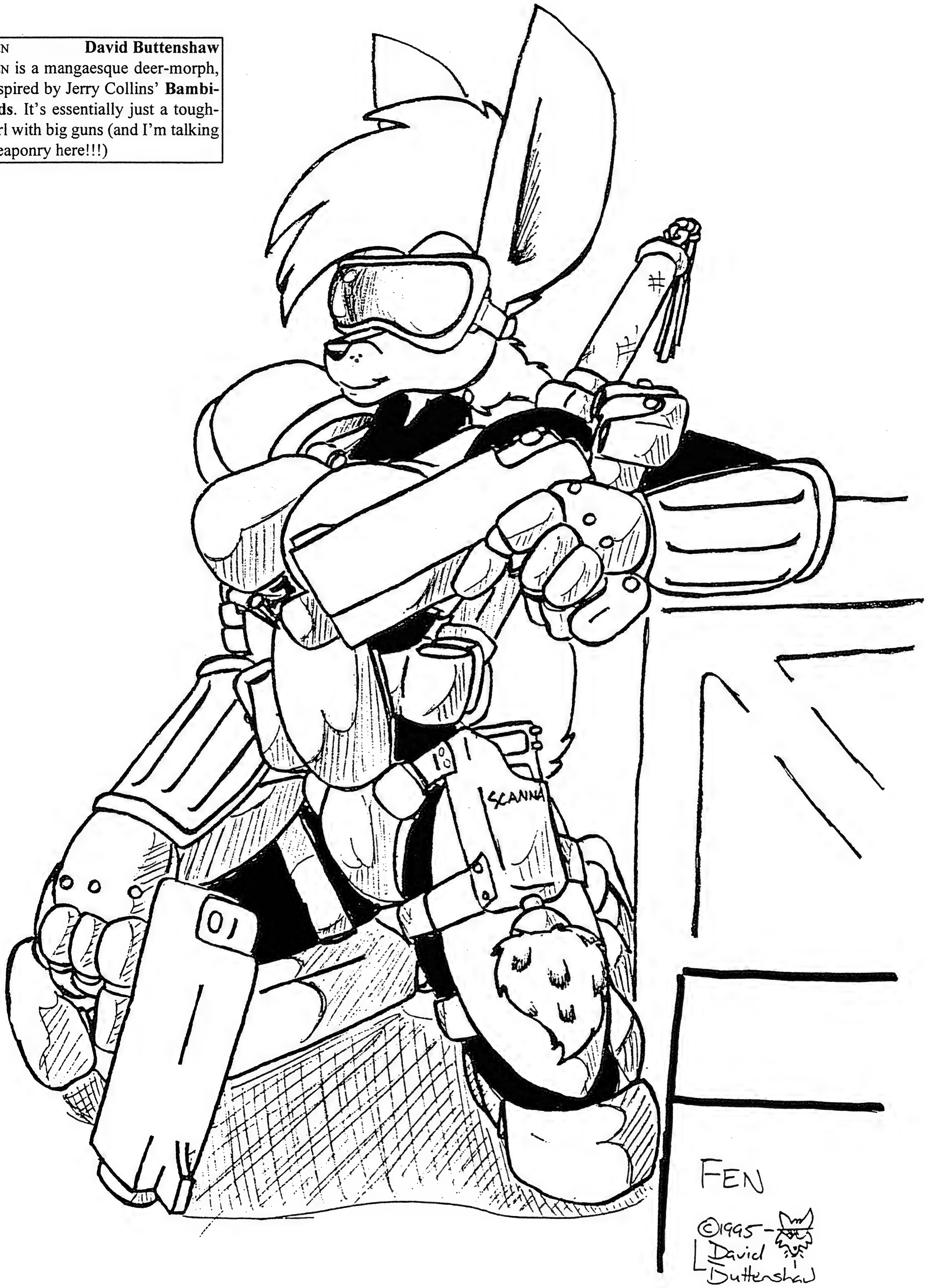


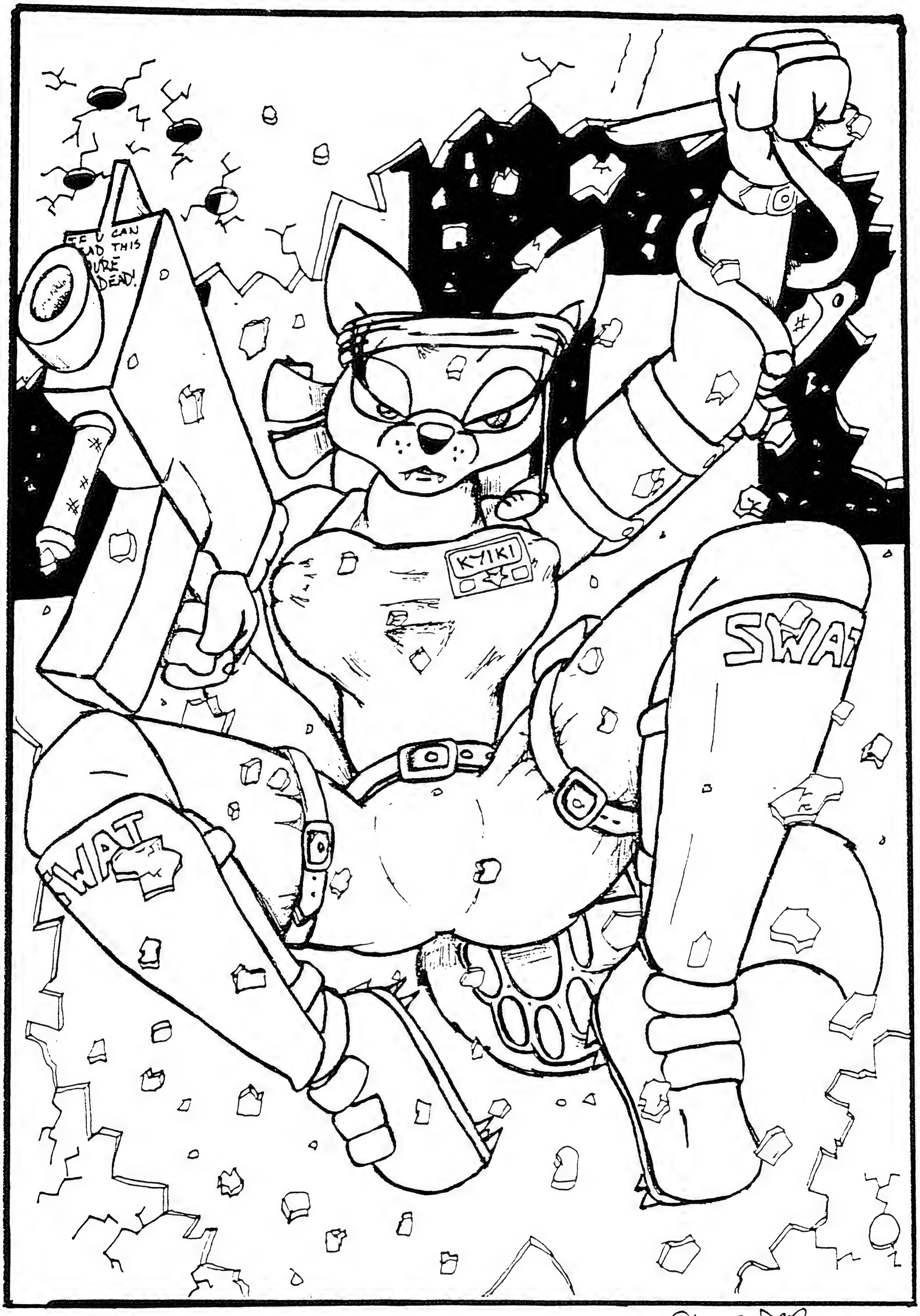
DREAM TEAM **Matt McCullar**

We Americans host the Olmympics in Atlanta this year, and I've never been fond of allowing professionals to compete. It just kills the spirit of athletic competition, somehow. One should compete for the love of the game, and *then* go for the money. These vertically-enhanced players should provide some exciting sport for a change.

FEN **David Buttenshaw**

FEN is a mangaesque deer-morph, inspired by Jerry Collins' **Bambi-oids**. It's essentially just a tough-girl with big guns (and I'm talking weaponry here!!!)





©1995—
David
Buttenshaw

KYIKI **David Buttenshaw**

Just a tough female character, inpsired by **Appleseed** by Masasume Shiraw. I wanted her to appear tough, determined and mean. I also wanted to capture her dynamic nature, hence having her come through a shot up glass window **Die Hard** style.



GENESIS

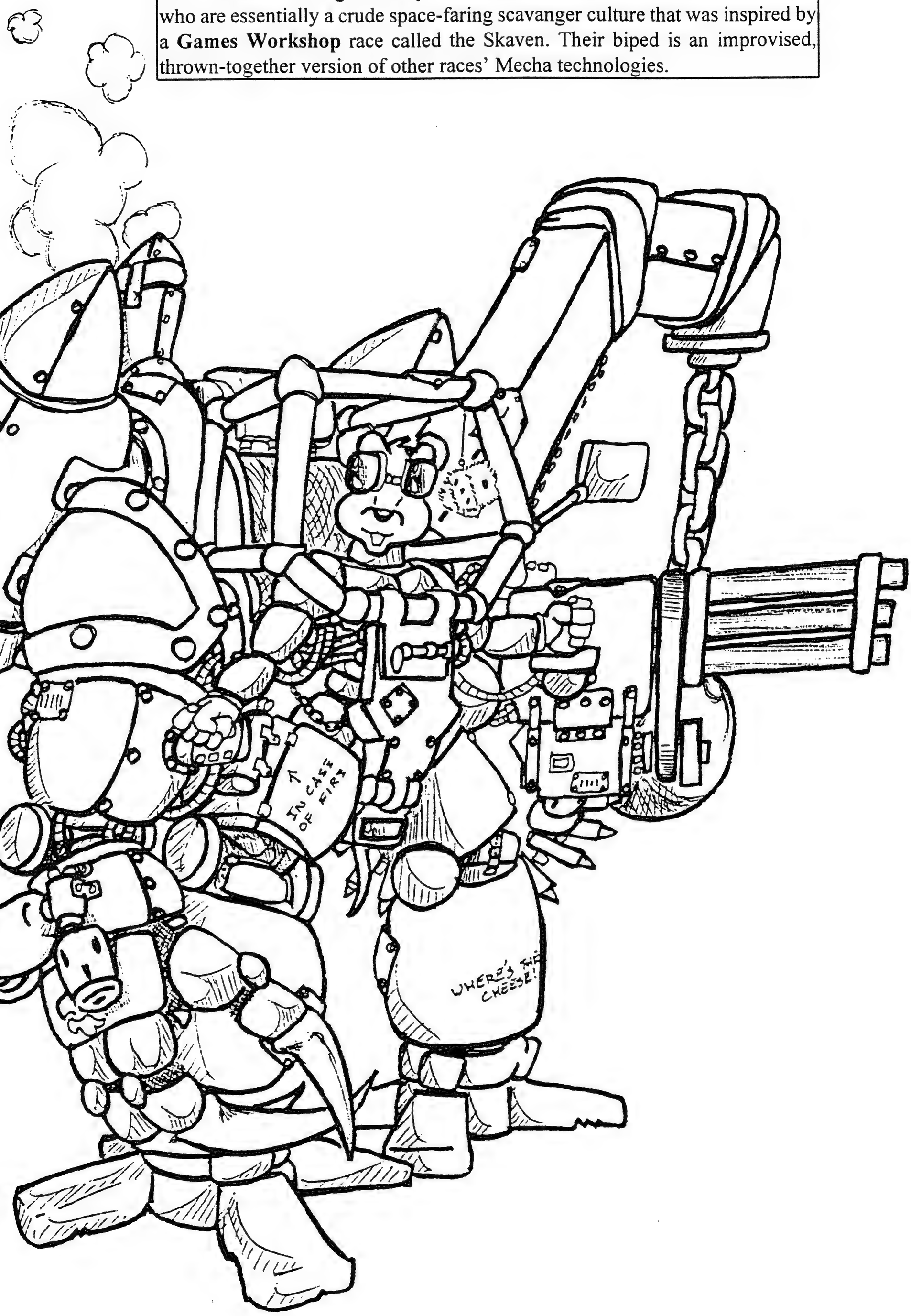
©1995 - David Buttenshaw

GENESIS **David Buttenshaw**

Apart from Manga and Anthropomorphics my other favourite art form is surrealism, hence I combined surrealism and anthropomorhics and produced GENESIS. Lots of floating stuff and puppet-like figures.

VERMYN BIPED **David Buttenshaw**

This is a Mecha design used by an alternate universe race called the Vermyn, who are essentially a crude space-faring scavanger culture that was inspired by a **Games Workshop** race called the Skaven. Their biped is an improvised, thrown-together version of other races' Mecha technologies.



VERMYN BIPED

©1995-
David
Buttenshaw

PHOTO SHOOT **Terry Knight**

This was drawn as a response to a message off the OZFURRY mailing list about the need for "proper lighting of your [furry] model," and a request for "a big grey she-wolf with deep brown eyes and a great fluffy sexy tail" ... (thanks, Wolfie!) The Christmas idea gradually developed as a seasonal theme, and is also my first attempt at drawing digitigrade legs on a furry.



"PHOTO SHOOT"

© TK 11/95

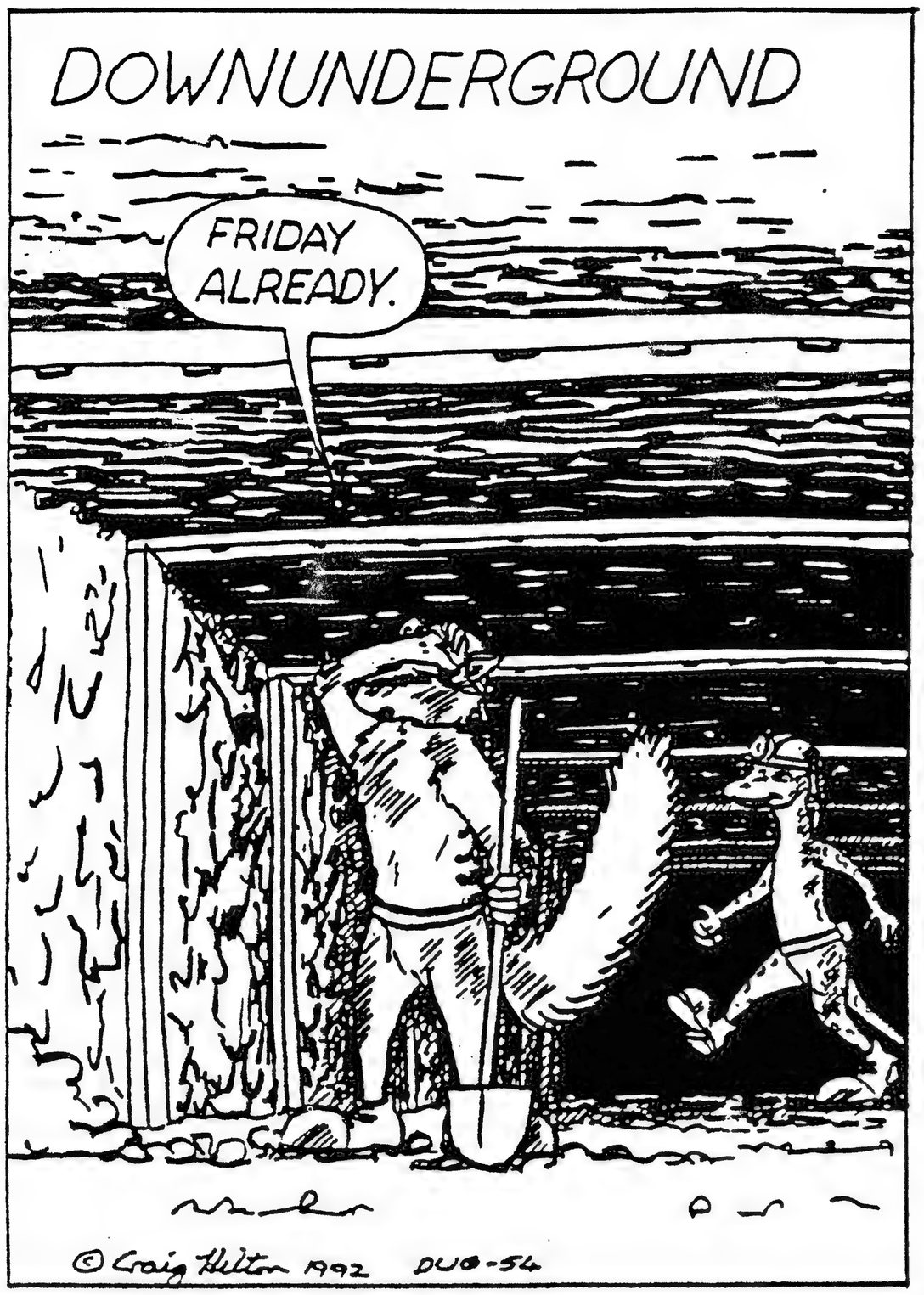


HOME SWEET HOME
Terry Knight
I was going for a romantic piece with the two furries in each others' arms. The background of the space station window came later, as I thought the original drawing looked too empty.

MISS NOVOYA ZVEZGOROD 1995 **Terry Knight**

This was inspired by a FurryMUCK character who was supposed to have come from the Russian Space Academy. The idea of a beauty contestant winner against a sparse backdrop of space hardware just appealed to me.




DOWNUNDERGROUND
FRIDAY ALREADY.
© Craig Hilton 1992 DUG-54


GEE, THE WEEK SEEMS TO GO BY SO QUICKLY THESE DAYS, NORRIE.
YEAH, BILL, THE DAYS JUST SEEM TO FLY BY!


YES, THAT'S RIGHT! IT WAS JUST CHRISTMAS LAST WEEK, AND NOW IT'S MAY!
I CAN'T REMEMBER A TIME WHEN THINGS WENT SO FAST!
ACTUALLY, THEY ALL SEEM THE SAME TO ME.


RUBBISH! WHAT WOULD YOU KNOW? THEY'RE GOING BY LIKE BLAZES!
YEAH! I MEAN IN THE SEVENTIES, NOW THEY WERE REAL DAYS!
SOMETHING TO DO WITH THE OZONE LAYER, YOU KNOW.

FOUNDATIONS OF ERMINETICS

by Simon Raboczi

"Well?"

My question hung on the air for several seconds while the guy in the grey Pestaway! coveralls considered it thoughtfully.

"Ain't mice."

"I know that! They're way too big, rats or something."

"Yeah. Rats."

"So you can get rid of them, right?" A second thoughtful pause met my confident assertion.

"Ain'tcher normal rats."

"Damn right! How the hell brutes that big get inside is what I can't figure."

"Nah", the exterminator waved his hand negligently. "You don't get it. There's rats, an' then there's what you got."

I consider myself mildly intelligent, and right now I felt I was being condescended to. Moreover, I was paying for the privilege. I took a breath, adopting a tone of voice that tiptoed the fine line between civility and condescending right back at him.

"In your professional opinion," I inquired, "what have I got?"

The Pestaway! guy looked down at his feet, adjusting his stance for what I sensed was going to be an uncharacteristically long speech. After yet another aggravating pause, he began:

"To be honest, I haven't never actually seen a domestic infestation of these before. Heard about them at the latest conference, though. You prob'ly got 'em on account of the unusually favourable environment in here." He cast a disparaging eye over my den and nodded to himself slightly. He gestured at the bookshelf. "Professional library, I guess?"

"More like general reference," I replied, "I'm a writer. I like to just be able to turn around and find what I need insofar as research is concerned."

He looked critically at the shelves, most of them packed two deep and books that wouldn't fit laying flat atop the others. I'd get more shelves if I had any place to put them. Loose photocopies in dog-eared, anonymous manila folders were stacked on the floor nearby.

"I guess you got some kinda system so you can find stuff, right?"

"It's a sedimentary filing system." I tried using one of those maddening mid-conversational pauses back at him. He ignored me blithely, flipping over a post-it note that happened to be lying near his toe. "Anything I need to refer to frequently naturally rises to the top of the pile. Everything else sifts to the bottom, the great pressure above it fossilising it for future reference."

"I suppose you use the computer there for research, too. Networked and all that?"

"Sure, that and image manipulation. I do my own illos—that's the scanner there, under the stack of CDs."

"Yeah, that'd be how they got in, all right."

"Look," I said, my temper rising as I noticed the totally irrelevant tack he was misleading the conversation on. "What the hell does this have to do with—"

"You *ever* vacuum this place?" He interrupted me quite suddenly, throwing me momentarily on the defensive as has surveyed the carpet: stacks of papers, loose notes and the odd sketchbook were arranged across it in a manner which doubtless appeared haphazard to the untrained eye.

With icy dignity I replied, "I vacuum between the paperwork." My tone dared him to doubt me. He sighed and scratched the back of his head.

"What you got here is an information-rich environment, a primordial ooze of trivia marinating in creative juices. One little flash of insight to catalyse this stuff and you end up with the basic building blocks of memetic biology: figments and Platonic ideals all over the place. Unless you censor everything religiously, you're bound to start culturing all sorts of things—innocuous clock ticks if you're lucky, but just as likely computer viruses and worms. Of course, getting rid of bugs is no big deal." He fixed me with a reproachful look. "The problems comes when all this festering data attracts larger vermin."

He pointed at the minitower case with the Gordian tangle of cables cascading from its hindside. "The dangerous ones start out by hijacking the high-speed IPC relays in your multiprocessor board. That's the distinguishing feature for vertebrates, the backbones. The most common ones, the ones you got, they turned up at Stanford originally. Nibbled around at the big drive packs they got there. That's where they got their common name, 'pack rats' ".

"You're telling me I've got rats in my computer."

"Nah." He shook his head. "They just got in that way. Now they're all over your house. I'm surprised you haven't noticed notes and stuff vanishing into their nests. If you can *see* them though, that's bad. It means they've gotten bold. They'll creep up on a person and steal the fresh ideas straight out of your subconscious. Been sleeping okay?"

A sick feeling gripped the pit of my stomach as the truth of what he was saying dawned on me. Everything fell into place: the corrupted floppies, my writers' block, and those horrible blank dreams. I felt like the inside of my skull was covered with filthy little footprints. I felt

violated. I felt like I was going to be ill right then and there.

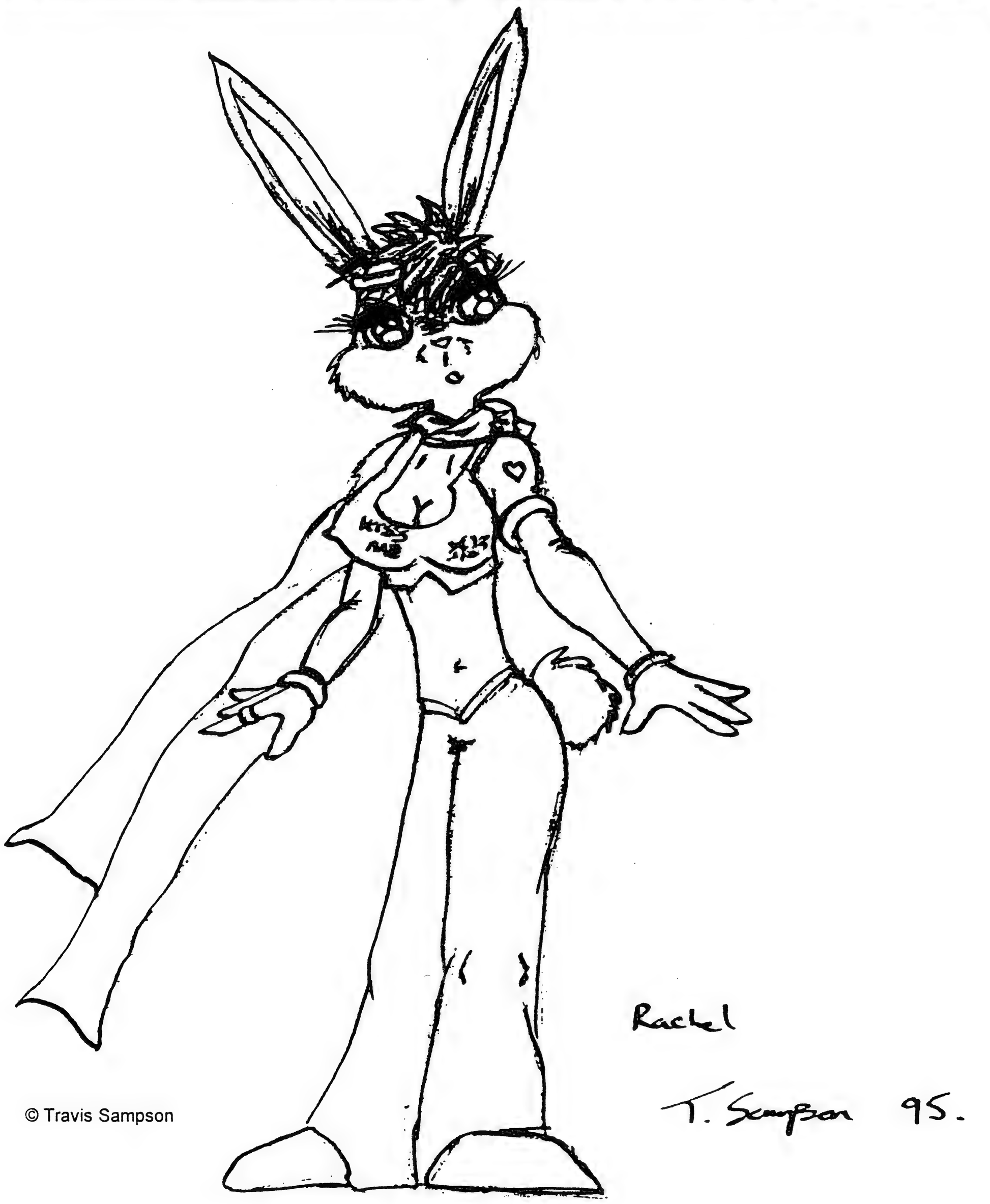
"So, what can you do to get rid of these pack rats?"

"Outta my speciality, 'fraid. My M.Sc is biochemistry; what you want is some kind of Inf Tech guy. From what I do know, though, I figure the only way to shift these beasties is to burn or reformat everything. You got maybe a fifty-fifty chance of getting rid of them that way. The problem is, in a built-up place like this they forage on the airwaves and can subsist indefinitely on 2-minute commercial radio pop songs."

"I can't burn my bookshelf!" Financial value aside, the image of book-burning was the height of barbarism: unthinkable. My mind raced, desperate for alternatives. "Isn't there anything that gets rid of these things? A Cheshire cat, maybe?"

He shrugged. "Yeah, maybe. Schrödingers are good too, I hear, except for up and dying without warning. Like I said, though, not my field." He pulled out a pencil and a notepad of his own. "The best I can do is give you the address of a place where you can get help." He printed with rapid, neat strokes and handed a folded slip of paper to me.

"I'm off, now. I strongly suggest you handle this immediately." He pointed at the slip. "Before they get this, too."



© Travis Sampson



AMARA AND TORMANI
Amy Pronovost
The Totoro picture and comic strip are for **Anime Australia** too, but I'd like exposure from all fronts (uhm… could have phrased that differently). There will be a sequel to the comic strip (several, actually) and no others will have anime in them (I really don't like anime all that much). It's something to "feed to the masses", so to speak, before I can exhibit my creative licence in **AA**.

RACCOON LADY IN THE FOREST
Amy Pronovost
I thought I'd do something special and draw a background. As a result this drawing took me twice as long as all the others (two hours rather than half to one) and it worked. It is my most requested drawing at the moment. I like it.


-A.PRO
© '95-

Kangaroo Court



Jagafeh Press
c/o Jason Gaffney
10 Hibiscus Street
Cabbage Tree Point Qld 4207
laine@gil.ipswichcity.qld.gov.au

Tim Richards
timrelle@perth.DIALix.oz.au

You seem to be developing a nice balance of art and text, judging from *SFL* #2, giving more for the reader's dollar. The artwork can be admired straight away, while the articles can be read at leisure. Reviews and articles about anthropomorphic art are good choices for a furry zine and provide food for thought alongside the pictures. Hopefully Craig Hilton has started the ball rolling and other people will supply articles for future issues.

I would have to disagree with Craig's negative review of **The Lion King**. He focuses entirely on the storyline and fails to examine the most successful elements of the film: its beautiful music and its gorgeous, stunning portrayal of the African landscape. These were sufficient to lift it out of the ordinary. It was also refreshing to see a Disney film focusing entirely on animals as the main characters, not set in a town or village.

As for the story, it did initially seem to me that it was odd for the herbivores to bow down before a newborn cub who would one day, well, eat them. However, if you want to base a film around the classic concept of a lion as King of the Animals it is difficult to see how this could be avoided. It also occurred to me that the common animals might accept Mufasa as king in the same manner as peasants in the feudal system. That is, they would accept his right to cull their number in return for stability within his borders and protection from more uncontrolled predatory forces outside. There are plenty of examples in history of people preferring "the devil you know" in exchange for stability and continuity. On top of this, the Circle of Life concept could act to reconcile the animals to their place in the scheme of things in the same way the Church used the promise of a better life after death to pacify the peasants. It all holds together with a little thought.

Simba may come across as "the lovable All-American kid", but how surprising is this in a Disney movie? Did Belle really come across as French, did Aladdin seem Arabian? I don't think so. I agree this is a weakness of Disney films, but it's not just confined to **The Lion King**. And after all, it is an American production in the end. If other countries could reduce their reliance on Hollywood and produce their own animated features, perhaps we would see a more international approach.

I think you can be too picky about the smaller details of **The Lion King**. Sure, we know Simba wasn't to blame for Mufasa's death, but people often do blame themselves for events that were really out of their control, with an "if only" approach. I agree that Simba hasn't obviously developed into a wise leader by the end of the film, but he has been given a look at life's darker side, a new role and a second chance, something that viewers would sympathise with. There's a potential at the end for Simba to put the past behind him and make something of his life, which I think is credible.

The Lion King storyline is certainly flawed and imperfect in the way that all Hollywood movies with a merchandising agenda are nowadays, but not irretrievably so. Its rich African feel, the music and the well-cast voices carry the story and make it an enjoyable experience. If you really want to see a Disney flick with a weak story that gives kids the wrong ideas, then check out **Pocahontas**...

Changing the subject to artwork, I was very impressed by Grant Freckelton's art in both *SFL* #1 & 2. The depth and feeling he brings to his drawings with his "noir" style is incredible. I would love to see him illustrate a whole story in the same way. Do keep featuring as much work as you can get from him!

Best wishes for future issues.

Craig Hilton
Collie WA

It's here! It's here! It's finally here! *South Fur Lands*, Australia's first furzine! Our country's furry fandom has been born at last!

Truly, Jason, Issue 1 was a splendid piece of work, and I look forward to its growth over the following issues. I look forward to a showcasing of our furry writers and artists, of varying ages and backgrounds.

It was a treat to see Gerard Ashworth putting in his own unmistakable contribution. I'm a big **Weird Stress Kittens** fan. Your **OzCon 4** report was informative too, an excellent complement to the video you sent me of the Con. And the other bits and pieces—it's all so exciting! However much work you and your team put into it all, I want you to know that it was all utterly worthwhile.

The mail bag was kind of bare, so we decided to cull a comment about issue 1 from the OzFurry mailing list.

Richard Chandler
(Editor of **Gallery**)

Since I'm being ~~blamed~~ credited with the binding advice, let me say "You forgot to crimp the staples!" They're starting to wear through the tape already. Also, dark brown may have been a bad choice for the cover colour.

Grant Freckelton. Really neat stuff — some of the most interesting art in the book.

It's a good start. Another couple of issues and you'll really hit your stride.

Peddling their Wares...

We southern most furry people would now like to mention our northern most Commonwealth cousins, **The Furthest North Crew** in Canada. **The Furthest North Crew** is an APA, made up of forty members, whose artwork comprises professional artists to diehard furry fans. While the APA is members only, they do produce a yearly compilation of their best work which is available to the general public called **The Furthest North Crew Showcase**. I've already looked at issue #2 of **The FNC Showcase** and I must admit that there's definitely some interesting ideas floating around the heads of those Canadians. It is well worth the cost of purchase. For information on purchasing a copy of **The FNC Showcase** or getting a piece of commissioned art from one of its members, write to:

Growl
FNC Editor
6794 Fisher Road
Ontario, NY USA
14519-1970

Or alternatively, write to the Production Manager, John Boulton, at:

66 Wimbleton Road
Etobicoke,
Ontario Canada
M9A 3S1

The FNC Showcase is also available from Mailbox Books.

Another issue of *South Fur Lands* has been laid to rest. But wait, there's more! Issue four will be coming out in early May, with a cover by Skye Ogden and more of the best of what Australasian furrydom has to offer. And still at the low price of $3.50. New Zealand orders add $1.00 and overseas orders add $2.50. All prices are quoted in Australian currency. Subscriptions continue to be available for the cover price times the number of issues you want. Issues are also available from **Mailbox Books** in America at US$5 plus postage.

To subscribe or send submissions, write to:

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Email: Marko Laine at laine@gil.ipswichcity.qld.gov.au

Submissions

We welcome submissions, art and text, from creators south of the equator and north-of-the-equator creators with an Australasian theme. Text submissions are preferred in standard ASCII on 3½ inch disks in either Macintosh or DOS formats or vie email. Alternatively, they may be submitted on single-sided typed sheets with the lines double-spaced. Artwork submissions should at least a 15 mm border on all sides. Good quality photocopies of completed inked works only, please. All full page artwork submissions should include a brief abstract explaining the piece, or the inspiration that went into it. Electronic submissions of artwork may be in any major format, but must be at *at least* 300 dpi resolution.

We are also looking for cover art. Cover art should include the title in some way and leave space for details such as the issue number.

Any submission of one page or more that we use earns the creator a *free copy* of that issue.



Don't forget (if you're over 18) to check out the SFL: Sex and Violence Supplement. He did... ☞



TK 5/95
"Young Pioneer"